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14 June 2005

Mr. Willie Thomas, Superintendent of Education
MACON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Post Office Box 830090
Tuskegee, Alabama 36083-0090

RE: SOUTH MACON SCHOOL

Dear Mr. Thomas:

On behalf of the parents, students, former students and supporters represented in the enclosed Petition, and as a graduate of South Macon High School, Class of 1970, I am writing with deep regret of the Board's recent decision to close my Alma Mater. Over two years ago when this idea first became known to me and many others, I made the request that you and the Board would rescind the recommendation of the Review Committee to close South Macon School. This time, I am requesting, on behalf of those who support this, that you reconsider and rescind your decision to close it.

As you know, many of the arguments have been made to you and the Board in support of South Macon. I will not rehash them in this letter. However, I will raise two main points that I think you need to consider. One, the serious social problems that are bound to result from the closing of South Macon School; and, two, the fact that the Board has not received court or Department of Justice approval to close a school in our system. While the second point may be easier to remedy than the first, I think the contention of the parents, students, former students and supporters of South Macon is that we do not want our children subjected to the ills of an unwise decision.

Yes, South Macon School presents some financial problems for the Board, however, it has never presented the problems of violence, drugs and sexual misconduct that are prevalent in the inner city schools of Tuskegee. These social problems are apt to be more devastating to our children and community than any deficiency in funding could ever be. Frankly, we do not want our children having to be confronted with the ills of a socially bad environment. Many of our children have already experienced a negative "culture shock" since attending Tuskegee Institute Middle



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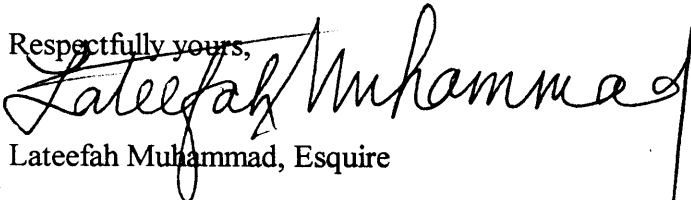
School. And, as one parent puts it, "Isn't it strange how, years ago, as a people, we did so much better with getting our children educated when we had so much less (in terms of financial and other resources)?" I wonder why is this one of the plights of our community today? We contend that it has more to do with the aforementioned social problems that are out-of-control than it does with the lack of financial and other resources.

In light of all of the above, we are sincere in our efforts to keep South Macon School as the "hub" of our community. One consideration that we have is to examine the possibility of South Macon School becoming a charter or magnet school. If the Board rescinds its decision to keep South Macon School open for at least one more year, then we will use the time to plan for the next school term and to work with you and the Board to make a new development for our school. We believe this is a justifiable reason to allow the school to operate under the present system for another year.

We certainly will appreciate your and the Board's review of our request. Upon doing so, let it be your and the Board's judgment to rescind the decision to close South Macon this year. South Macon School began educating children on January 6, 1926, and it represents a great legacy for all of us. Please help us keep our legacy alive.

Thank you and the Board for your kind consideration and cooperation.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lateefah Muhammad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end of the name.

Lateefah Muhammad, Esquire

Enclosures

cc: Members, Macon County Board of Education
Honorable Katy Campbell, Esquire, President
Honorable Harold White, Vice-President
Honorable Alfred Randolph
Honorable Alphonso Robinson
Honorable Ora Manning